

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 AID-05 IGA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00
XMB-04 OPIC-06 EB-08 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-15 AGRE-00 INT-05 COME-00 /098 W
-----232003Z 061469 /41

P 231836Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 76

UNCLAS SANTO DOMINGO 1394

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, ETRD, ECLA, CU, DR
SUBJ: CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S STATEMENT AT CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT
MEETING

1. CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTER ISIDORO MALMIERCA PEOLI, PRESENTLY
IN THE DR FOR MINISTERIAL-LEVEL TALKS AS HEAD OF THE CUBAN
DELEGATION TO THE SECOND SESSION OF THE CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT
AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE (CDCC), SAID IN REMARKS TO THE PRESS,
ON MARCH 21, THAT THE LIFTING OF THE ECONOMIC BLOCKADE BY THE
US WAS ESSENTIAL FOR THE RENEWAL OF RELATIONS BETWEEN CUBA
AND THE US. HE DESCRIBED THE US BLOCKADE AS A "KNIFE AGAINST
THE THROAT OF CUBA", MAKING IT IMPOSSIBLE TO NEGOTIATE, AND SAID
THAT THE INITIATIVE FOR THE RENEWAL OF RELATIONS MUST BE TAKEN
BY THE US. IN MALMIERCA'S OPINION, PRESIDENT CARTER WAS OBLIGED
TO LIFT THE TRAVEL RESTRICTION TO CUBA FOR US CITIZENS BECAUSE
IT WAS AN UNJUST MEASURE.

2. ACCORING TO MALMIERCA, THE EFFECTS OF THE US POLICY WITH
RESPECT TO HUMAN RIGHTS WILL HAVE TO BE SEEN IN PRACTICE. IN
CUBA, HE ASSERTED, NOT ONLY THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OF MAN,
BUT ALSO OTHER ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RIGHTS, SUCH AS EDUCATION
AND EMPLOYMENT, ARE RESPECTED AND ARE LAID OUT IN THE CUBAN
CONSTITUTION. WHEN QUERIED ON THE SITUATION OF HUBERT MATOS, THE
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MINISTER SAID THIS WAS A CUBAN INTERNAL POLICY QUESTION AND NOT A
BARGAINING ELEMENT AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE, POINTING OUT THAT
MATOS WAS TRIED PUBLICLY AND CONDEMNED ACCORDING TO THE
EXISTING LAWS OF CUBA. MALMIERCA DECLARED THAT IN THE US THERE
IS UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE MOST ELEMENTAL HUMAN RIGHTS.

3. IN A FORMAL SPEECH BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON MARCH 21, MALMIERCA

URGED THE COUNTRIES OF THE CARIBBEAN REGION TO UNITE IN SEARCH OF A MORE JUST COMMERCIAL INTERCHANGE WITH DEVELOPED NATIONS IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE TRUE ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE FOR THE REGION, AND HE OFFERED CUBAN HELP. HE URGED THE COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT LATIN REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS SELA, GEPLACEA, OLADE, NUMUCAR, CARICOM AND ECLA.

4. FREQUENTLY INTERJECTING POLITICAL COMMENTS IN HIS SPEECH, MALMIERCA EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS IN NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE, THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE DEFEAT OF "SOUTH AFRICAN AND IMPERIALIST AGGRESSION" IN ANGOLA. HE SAW THE CARIBBEAN AS ONE OF THE AREAS OF THE WORLD MOST HEAVILY UNDER COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION, SINGLING OUT PUERTO RICO AS AN EXAMPLE, AND NOTING THAT THE US MAINTAINS A "DENSE, EXTENSIVE, AND REPUDIATED NETWORK OF MILITARY BASES IN VIEQUES, GUANTANAMO AND PANAMA."

5. MALMIERCA, WHO IS THE FIRST CABINET-LEVEL CUBAN OFFICIAL OF CASTRO'S GOVERNMENT TO VISIT THE DR, STATED UPON HIS ARRIVAL THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN GIVEN ANY INSTRUCTION TO DISCUSS THE QUESTION OF ESTABLISHING DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH THE DR. HURWITCH

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING DELEGATIONS, SPEECHES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-Mar-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977SANTO01394
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770100-0020
Format: TEL
From: SANTO DOMINGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770330/aaaabadf.tel
Line Count: 84
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ed94aab3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27-Sep-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3022975
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CUBAN FOREIGN MINISTER'S STATEMENT AT CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT MEETING
TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, ETRD, PORC, CU, DR, ECLA, (MALMIERCA PEOLI, ISIDORO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ed94aab3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009